

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 4 ISLAMABAD 2133

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINS, PK, SNAR
SUBJECT: POST-ELECTION SPECULATION

BEGIN SUMMARY

THIS MESSAGE SPECULATES ON THE POLICY IMPLICATIONS OF WHAT
NOW SEEM THE TWO MOST LIKELY OUTCOMES OF PAKISTAN'S GENERAL ELEC-
TIONS: THE PPP RETAINING OFFICE AT THE CENTER WITH A
REDUCED MAJORITY, AND A PNA VICTORY.

WE SUSPECT THAT IN DEALING WITH HIS ALTERED POLITICAL CIRCUM-
STANCES, A WEAKENED BHUTTO WILL AGAIN UNDERTAKE THE COMBINATION
OF REPRESSIVE MEASURES AND THE WOOING OF LESS COMMITTED OPPOSIT-
ION ELEMENTS WHICH CHARACTERIZED HIS FIRST TERM IN OFFICE. HUMAN
RIGHTS PROBLEMS COULD WELL RESULT. IN HIS APPROACH TO SUBSTANTIVE
POLICY, BHUTTO IS LIKELY TO PUT EVEN GREATER STREE THAN BEFORE
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ON IMMEDIATE POLITICAL GAIN AT THE EXPENSE OF LESS CERTAIN,
LONGER RANGE BENEFITS. HE WILL SEEK TO FIND SOME POLICY LESSONS
IN THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN: THE MOST IMPORTANT OF THESE IS LIKELY
TO BE GREATER ATTENTION TO HOLDING DOWN PRICES. "SOCIALISM" IS
APPARENTLY ALREADY A CASUALTY OF THE CAMPAIGN, AND FURTHER NATION-
ALIZATIONS APPEAR UNLIKELY EXCEPT IN CASES OF DIRE ECONOMIC NEED.

A WEAKENED BHUTTO IS LIKELY TO TREAT SENSITIVE INTERNATIONAL AND SECURITY ISSUES WITH EXTREME CAUTION. HE WILL HAVE MORE DIFFICULTY IN AGREEING TO DROP THE REPROCESSING PLANT. IF A SOLUTION IS NOT WORKED OUT, AND THE SYMINGTON AMENDMENT TRIGGERED IN CONSEQUENCE, HE IS LIKELY TO REACT STRIDENTLY, SEEING IN A NATIONALISTIC, ANTI-AMERICAN STANCE AN OPPORTUNITY TO WIN BACK LOST POLITICAL GROUND.

A WEAKENED BHUTTO WILL BE LIKELY TO PLAY A LESSER ROLE ON THE GLOBAL STAGE, AND GOP DIPLOMACY WOULD PROBABLY BECOME LESS ACTIVE.

THE PARTIES AND LEADERS COMPRISING THE PNA HAVE A LONG HISTORY OF PERSONAL AND POLITICAL DIFFERENCES WHICH WERE ONLY PAPERED OVER BY ITS VAGUE MANIFESTO. WE CANNOT ASSUME THAT THE GOVERNMENT IT ORGANIZES WILL BE A STABLE ONE, NOR CAN WE BE CERTAIN THAT ASGHAR KHAN, THE ALLIANCE'S DE FACTO LEADER, WILL HEAD IT. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, PREDICTIONS ABOUT WHAT SUCH A GOVERNMENT WOULD DO ARE DIFFICULT TO MAKE. THEY WILL TAKE TIME TO FORMULATE POLICIES, AND ARE LIKELY TO FOCUS MORE HEAVILY ON DOMESTIC MATTERS THAN ON FOREIGN AND SECURITY CONCERNS. THEY MAY SEE A WAY OUT OF THE DILEMMA OF THE REPROCESSING PLANT ISSUE, WHICH WILL HIT THEM SOON AFTER THEY TAKE OFFICE, BY SEEKING TO PERSUADE THE PUBLIC THAT THE DEAL WAS AN ILL-CONSIDERED NOTION OF THE DISCREDITED BHUTTO. BUT THEY HAVE HAD NO OPPORTUNITY TO FOCUS ON THE OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO THEM, AND NO ONE KNOWS HOW THEY MAY COME OUT. END SUMMARY.

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1. WITH LESS THAN A WEEK TO GO BEFORE THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BALLOTING, WE BELIEVE IT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO HAZARD A FEW SPECULATIVE THOUGHTS AS TO WHAT THE PAKISTAN ELECTIONS ARE LIKELY TO MEAN FOR THE CONDUCT AND SHAPE OF GOP POLICIES, PARTICULARLY AS THESE AFFECT US INTERESTS.

2. AS OUR REPORTING MESSAGES SUGGEST, THE OUTCOME OF THE ELECTION HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY UNCERTAIN. WE ARE NOT IN A POSITION TO MAKE ANY FIRM PREDICTION AND DO NOT INTEND TO TRY. IT DOES SEEM TO US, HOWEVER, THAT THERE ARE TWO SCENARIOS WHICH ARE MORE LIKELY TO OCCUR THAN OTHER POSSIBILITIES. THE FIRST INVOLVES THE PPP RETAINING OFFICE AT THE CENTER WITH A MAJORITY MUCH REDUCED FROM THE 126 OF 151 THE GOVERNMENT ENJOYED IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AT THE TIME OF ITS DISSOLUTION IN JANUARY, AND MUCH SMALLER THAN THE SWEEP PARTY LEADERS (AND MOST OTHER OBSERVERS) HAD CONFIDENTLY EXPECTED THE PPP TO WIN AS THE CAMPAIGN GOT UNDER WAY. THE OTHER IS A PNA VICTORY.

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3. A NARROW, FLAWED MANDATE. THE OPPOSITION HAS GIVEN AMPLE
ADVANCE WARNING THAT IT WILL REGARD A PPP VICTORY AS A FRAUD,
AND THE PNA CONTENDS THAT THE LARGE AND ENTHUSIASTIC RESPONSE
IT HAS RECEIVED INDICATED THAT THE POPULAR VERDICT HAS ALREADY
BEEN MADE IN ITS FAVOR. ALTHOUGH THIS APPROACH MAY HAVE BEGUN AS
A CAMPAIGN PLOY DESIGNED TO ENCOURAGE THE FAINTHEARTED TO OPPOSE
THE GOVERNMENT, PNA LEADERS NOW SEEM GENUINELY TO
HAVE COME TO BELIEVE IT. THEIR ALLEGATION IN THE EVENT OF A BHUTTO
VICTORY THAT THE ELECTION WAS STOLEN FROM THEM IS LIKELY TO BE
WIDELY CREDITED, PARTICULARLY IF THE PATTERN OF THE OUTCOME
SUGGESTS THAT THE PPP MARGIN WAS SECURED IN THOSE RURAL AREAS
TRADITIONALLY REGARDED AS MOST EASILY RIGGABLE. THE PPP MANDATE
IS LIKELY TO BE A FLAWED ONE IN THE SENSE THAT ITS 1970 ONE
NEVER WAS (WHEN IN A FREE AND FAIR CONTEST THE PARTY WON 81 OF
THE 138 WEST PAKISTAN SEATS, NINE TIMES MORE THAN THE RUNNER-UP).

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4. OUTRAGED BY THE "STOLEN ELECTION," THE OPPOSITION IS ALSO LIKELY TO SEE IT AS A DRAMATIC FIRST STEP LEADING TO THE EVENTUAL OUSTER OF BHUTTO FROM POWER, AND THEIR ANTAGONISTIC ATTITUDE TOWARD THE PRIME MINISTER WILL BE HEIGHTENED BY WHAT NOW SEEMS THE LIKELIHOOD OF SIGNIFICANT ELECTION VIOLENCE. A NUMBER OF UNPLEASANT POSSIBILITIES SUGGEST THEMSELVES: AN ATTEMPT TO LAUNCH A "NATIONAL MOVEMENT" TO FORCE BHUTTO OUT, A BOYCOTT OF ASSEMBLY PROCEEDINGS, REPRESSIVE COUNTERMEASURES BY THE GOVERNMENT. WHAT SEEMS LEAST LIKELY IS AN AMICABLE ARRANGEMENT UNDER WHICH THE WEAKENED PPP AND THE STRENGTHENED OPPOSITION MANAGE TO SIT DOWN TOGETHER IN PARLIAMENT IN RESPONSIBLE FASHION.

5. ASSUMING, AS WE DO UNDER THIS SCENARIO, THAT BHUTTO WOULD BE ABLE TO HEAD OFF ANY IMMEDIATE OPPOSITION CHALLENGE TO HIS ANNOUNCED VICTORY, WHAT WILL HIS LONGER TERM STRATEGY BE IN DEALING WITH HIS ALTERED POLITICAL CIRCUMSTANCES? WE SUSPECT THAT IN GENERAL TERMS IT WILL AGAIN COMPRISE A COMBINATION OF REPRESSIVE MEASURES AND WOOING OF LESS COMMITTED OPPOSITION ELEMENTS WHICH CHARACTERIZED HIS FIRST TERM IN OFFICE. BHUTTO'S (RENEWED) RESORT TO REPRESSIVE MEASURES COULD HAVE ADVERSE IMPACT ON PAK-US RELATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR GREATER CONCERN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS. IN HIS APPROACH TO SUBSTANTIVE POLICY, HE IS LIKELY TO PUT EVEN GREATER STRESS THAN BEFORE ON IMMEDIATE POLITICAL GAIN AT THE EXPENSE OF LESS CERTAIN, LONGER RANGE BENEFITS. DURING HIS FIRST TERM, ALTHOUGH BASICALLY A CAUTIOUS POLITICIAN, HE WAS WILLING TO MAKE SOME DECISIONS WHICH MIGHT HAVE BEEN POLITICALLY UNPOPULAR. HE WAS ABLE TO DO SO SINCE HE HAD A CERTAIN CONFIDENCE INSPIRED BY THE MANTLE OF LEGITIMACY GIVEN HIM BY HIS SOLID VICTORY IN 1970. IF HE IS STRIPPED OF THAT LEGITIMACY, AND HIS MANDATE IS QUESTIONED, HIS CONSERVATIVE APPROACH TO POLITICAL CHANCE-TAKING WILL BE FURTHER REINFORCED. BHUTTO WILL BECOME A LESS CONFIDENT, MORE ERRATIC AND SUSPICIOUS LEADER AND ONE MUCH LESS WILLING TO PAY THE PRICE FOR INNOVATIVE CHANGE WHICH MIGHT THREATEN HIS POSITION. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, WE CAN EXPECT LITTLE SIGNIFICANT ACTION IN SPECIFIC PROGRAMS OF INTEREST TO US WHICH DO NOT OFFER AN IMMEDIATE POLITICAL PAY-OFF TO A PRIME MINISTER

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LOOKING FOR WAYS TO BOLSTER HIS REDUCED PUBLIC SUPPORT. FOR EXAMPLE, ACTION ON THE NARCOTICS CONTROL AND POPULATION POLICY FRONTS WILL STAGNATE. THE LATTER HAS OF COURSE ALREADY BEEN DENOUNCED WITH APPARENT IMPUNITY IN THE PNA MANIFESTO, AND THE FACT THAT IT WAS NOT MENTIONED IN THE PPP MANIFESTO AND GONE UNDEFENDED BY THE PPP IS A GOOD INDICATION OF WHAT BHUTTO JUDGES ITS POLITICAL IMPACT TO BE.

6. MORE GENERALLY, BHUTTO WILL BE SEEKING TO FIND SOME POLICY LESSONS IN THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN. THIS HAS PROVIDED THE FIRST SERIOUS INDICATION OF POPULAR SENTIMENT IN YEARS, AND THE PM IS TOO POLITICALLY ASTUTE TO IGNORE IT, HOWEVER MUCH HE MANY

DENOUNCE, CORRECTLY, OPPOSITION DEMAGOGY AND IRRESPONSIBILITY.

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7. THE MOST IMPORTANT OF THESE IS LIKELY TO BE GREATER
ATTENTION TO HOLDING DOWN PRICES. THEY WAY THE INFLATION ISSUE
CAUGHT ON IN THE CAMPAIGN SUGGESTS THAT PEOPLE HAVE BEEN FAR
MORE IMPRESSED WITH THE INCREASE IN PRICES OF BASIC COMMODITIES
COMPARED WITH THREE-FOUR YEARS AGO THAN WITH EITHER THE
PARALLEL INCREASE IN WAGES OR THE SLOWING IN INFLATION IN THE
PAST YEAR. WE WOULD THUS EXPECT PRICE CONTROLS AND SUBSIDIES
TO PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN AN ANTI-INFLATION STRATEGY, AND
MONETARY AND INTEREST RATE POLICY A MUCH LESS IMPORTANT ONE.
"SOCIALISM" IS APPARENTLY ALREADY A CASUALTY OF THE CAMPAIGN.
THE WORD HAS COMPLETELY DISAPPEARED FROM THE PPP ELECTION
LEXICON. FURTHER NATIONALIZATIONS WOULD APPEAR UNLIKELY
EXCEPT IN CASES OF DIRE ECONOMIC NEED. WHETHER MORE
PRO-BUSINESS POLICIES WOULD ENSUE IS MORE PROBLEMATIC. IN
GENERAL, EFFORTS TO STEP UP AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, ESPECIALLY
WHEAT, WOULD PROBABLY STILL BE REGARDED AS POLITICAL WINNERS.
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HOWEVER, IN LIGHT OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PRICE ISSUE, IT MIGHT BE DIFFICULT FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO USE PRICING POLICY AS AN IMPORTANT TOOL IN THIS AREA. THE PM WILL ALSO SEEK DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS THAT PROVIDE MAXIMUM POSITIVE POLITICAL IMPACT SUCH AS RURAL ELECTRIFICATION, AND MORE SCHOOLS. STEPPED UP ATTEMPTS TO STRENGTHEN THE GOP'S ISLAMIC IMAGE ALSO SEEM IN THE CARDS, FURTHERING THE TENDENCY OF THE LAST YEARS.

8. A WEAKENED BHUTTO IS LIKELY TO TREAT SENSITIVE INTERNATIONAL AND SECURITY ISSUES WITH EXTREME CAUTION. THE REPROCESSING ISSUE IS AN OBVIOUS EXAMPLE HERE. IT DID NOT SURFACE SIGNIFICANTLY IN THE CAMPAIGN BECAUSE ALL SIDES WERE OSTENSIBLY AGREED THAT THE CONTRACT WITH THE FRENCH SHOULD BE CARRIED THROUGH. FOR BHUTTO TO DROP IT, EVEN AS PART OF AN ATTRACTIVE FORMULA, WOULD LEAVE THE PM OPEN TO THE ANGRY RECRIMINATIONS HE WILL WANT PARTICULARLY KEENLY TO AVOID. AT THE SAME TIME, IF NO SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION CAN BE FOUND TO THE REPROCESSING ISSUE, AND THE SYMINGTON AMENDMENT IS TRIGGERED IN CONSEQUENCE, A WEAKENED BHUTTO IS LIKELY TO REACT MORE STRIDENTLY THAN A PM CONFIDENT OF HIS POSITION. HE WOULD SEE IN THE ADOPTION OF A SHARPLY NATIONALISTIC AND ANTI-AMERICAN STANCE THE OPPORTUNITY TO RECOVER SOME LOST POLITICAL GROUND, AND A WAY TO BEAT BACK THOSE WHO WILL CLAIM THAT HE BUNGLED. THERE IS LIKELY TO BE NO SIGNIFICANT MOVEMENT ON THE INDO-PAK FRONT. FURTHER NORMALIZATION OF PAK-AFGHAN RELATIONS MAY BE COMPLICATED BY THE DEMAND FOR WALI KHAN'S RELEASE HAVING BECOME A FEATURE IN THE PNA CAMPAIGN. THE PPP COUNTERED STRONGLY, AND BHUTTO COULD FIND IT DIFFICULT TO STAND DOWN IF THIS WERE A CONDITION IN AN OVERALL SETTLEMENT WITH KABUL. THE GENERALLY EXACERBATED RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PPP AND THE OPPOSITION PARTIES WILL ALSO MAKE AN ACCOMMODATION WHICH INCLUDES RELEASE OF THE IMPRISONED NAP LEADERS LESS EASY.

9. MORE GENERALLY, BHUTTO'S ELECTION SETBACK WILL DAMAGE HIS EFFORTS TO PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN THE THIRD WORLD. HIS FELLOW THIRD WORLD RULERS ARE LIKELY TO CONSIDER THAT THIS CONFIDENTIAL

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HAS DAMAGED HIS PRESTIGE. MOREOVER, HIS TROUBLES AT HOME WILL TAKE UP MORE TIME BOTH FOR PARTISAN POLITICAL MANEUVER AND THE WORKING UP OF FRESH DOMESTIC POLICIES. HE MAY ALSO FEEL, AS OTHER THIRD WORLD LEADERS DO, THAT PROLONGED ABSENCES ABROAD MAY NOT BE THE WISEST COURSE IN HIS REDUCED POLITICAL CIRCUMSTANCES. HE WILL NOT GIVE UP HIS GLOBAL STATESMAN ASPIRATIONS -- HIS INCLINATIONS WILL STILL BE IN THAT DIRECTION AND HE WILL CONTINUE TO SEE SOME POLITICAL PAYOFF IN STRUTTING THE WORLD STAGE -- BUT HE IS LIKELY TO REDUCE THE LEVEL OF HIS ACTIVITIES.

10. ASIDE FROM THE GREATER CAUTION SHOWN IN APPROACHING SENSITIVE INTERNATIONAL ISSUES AND THE LESSER WORLD STATESMAN ROLE FOR BHUTTO PERSONALLY (WHICH WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY BE REFLECTED IN A GENERALLY LESS ACTIVE GOP DIPLOMACY), WE WOULD NOT EXPECT TO SEE THE PM INITIATE ANY MAJOR CHANGES IN PAK FOREIGN POLICY. THIS HAS NOT BEEN AN ISSUE IN THE ELECTION -- THE PN CALL FOR WITHDRAWAL FROM CEN TO NOT WITHSTANDING -- AND AMID HIS OTHER PRE-OCCUPATIONS THE PM WILL PROBABLY WANT TO LEAVE WELL ENOUGH ALONE. HOWEVER, IF THE SYMINGTON AMENDMENT COMES INTO EFFECT, WITH CONSEQUENT LOSS TO PAKISTAN OF BOTH TANGIBLE AND INTANGIBLE US SUPPORT, A WEAKENED BHUTTO WILL FEEL A GREATER NEED TO SEEK IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS TO BALANCE THIS. (THERE WILL BE MANY ELEMENTS WHICH WILL INFLUENCE THE PAK DECISION, OF COURSE, AND WE CANNOT FORECAST NOW HOW THE GOP WILL FINALLY COME DOWN.)

11. A PNA VICTORY
IN THIS ANALYSIS, WE ARE ASSUMING THAT AFTER THE ELECTION BHUTTO WILL BE ABLE IN GENERAL TO MAINTAIN A STABLE POLITICAL SITUATION, PROBABLY LESS THAN DURING HIS FIRST FIVE YEARS IN OFFICE BUT SUFFICIENT TO KEEP PAKISTAN FROM BECOMING THE

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ELEMENT OF SUBCONTINENTAL INSECURITY AND UNCERTAINTY WHICH MADE IT A REGIONAL PROBLEM AT TIMES IN THE PAST. WE CANNOT MAKE THE SAME ASSUMPTION FOR A PNA GOVERNMENT. HOW LONG THE GROUP OF DISPARATE POLITICAL PARTIES WHICH MAKE IT UP WILL HOLD TOGETHER IS UNCERTAIN, AND THOUGH ASGHAR KHAN HAS EMERGED IN THE COURSE OF THE CAMPAIGN AS ITS DE FACTO LEADER IT IS POSSIBLE THAT IN THE WAKE OF AN ELECTORAL VICTORY THIS WILL BE SERIOUSLY CHALLENGED. (WALI KHAN'S POST-ELECTION EMERGENCE FROM JAIL WILL BE AN OBVIOUS FACTOR IN A LIKELY LEADERSHIP STRUGGLE.) IT LEADERS AND PARTIES HAVE A LONG HISTORY OF PERSONAL AND POLITICAL DIFFERENCES WHICH WERE ONLY PAPERED OVER BY THE VAGUE, LARGELY NON-SPECIFIC, ISLAMIC-ORIENTED MANIFESTO THEY FINALLY MANAGED TO PUT TOGETHER. IF PAKISTAN POLITICAL EXPERIENCE IS ANY GUIDE, ITS POLICY PROBLEMS AND INTERNAL DIFFERENCES ARE LIKELY TO BE EXACERBATED BY THE APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP OF REBEL PPP MNAS, ABANDONING THAT
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NO-LONGER GOVERNING PARTY.

12. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, WE FIND IT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO MAKE ANY PREDICTIONS OF THE PROGRAMS A PNA GOVERNMENT WOULD ADOPT. ONLY A FEW POINTS CAN REASONABLY BE MADE:

(A) DESPITE WHAT THEY NOW SAY, THE PNA LEADERS HAD NOT EXPECTED TO COME TO POWER AND ITS LEADERS HAVE PROBABLY GIVEN LITTLE RESPONSIBLE THOUGHT TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONCRETE POLICY. THEY WILL HAVE HAD NO TRANSITION PERIOD, AND WILL TAKE SOME TIME TO WORK OUT PROGRAMS, PARTICULARLY IN THE ECONOMIC AREA. TO DEMONSTRATE THAT THEY ARE MOVING FORWARD, THEY MAY PROMPTLY ENACT CERTAIN NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF THEIR MANIFESTO, E.G. PROHIBITION, A BAN ON GAMBLING AND KILLING THE FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAMS. (IF ASGHAR KHAN IS CHOSEN AS PM, WE DO NOT THINK HE WOULD IMMEDIATELY WITHDRAW FROM CENTO, REGARDLESS OF THE PNA MANIFESTO PROMISE TO DO SO, BUT WOULD FIRST SOLICIT THE SHAH'S AND OUR VIEWS AND CONSIDER THE US MILITARY SUPPLY SITUATION.)

(B) THEY ARE LIKELY TO FOCUS MUCH MORE HEAVILY ON DOMESTIC POLICIES THAN ON FOREIGN AND SECURITY CONCERNS. IN DEALING WITH THE LATTER, THEY WOULD PROBABLY MAINTAIN THE GENERAL LINES OF BHUTTO'S APPROACH, THOUGH WITHOUT HIS ACTIVISM. IN CARRYING OUT THIS POLICY, THEY WILL DEPEND HEAVILY ON THE BUREAUCRACY.

(C) LIKE A WEAKENED BHUTTO, THEY WILL BE CAUTIOUS IN DEALING WITH SENSITIVE INTERNATIONAL ISSUES. ONE OF THE FIRST TO CONFRONT THEM OF COURSE, WILL BE THE REPROCESSING ISSUE. THEY WILL BE LARGELY UNINFORMED ABOUT THE INTRICACIES AND MECHANICS OF THE PROBLEM, AND WILL SUDDENLY FACE THE DIFFICULT CHOICE BETWEEN LOSING THE MATERIAL AND POLITICAL

SUPPORT OF THE US (NOT TO BE LIGHTLY DISMISSED BY AN INSECURE GOVERNMENT JUST INSTALLED) AND BEING ACCUSED OF SELLING OUT VITAL PAKISTAN NATIONAL SECURITY INTERESTS. THEY MAY SEEK DELAY IN COMING TO A DECISION, AND MIGHT SEE A WAY OUT OF THEIR DILEMMA BY PERSUADING THE PUBLIC THAT THE REPROCESSING PLANT WAS AN ILL-CONSIDERED NOTION OF THE DISCREDITED BHUTTO WHICH
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COULD BE POSTPONED OF SOME OTHER TIME. BUT HERE TOO, WE SIMPLY DO NOT KNOW HOW THEY WILL GO.

13. A PNA VICTORY WILL IN ANY EVENT USHER IN YET ANOTHER NEW PHASE IN PAKISTAN'S ERRATIC THIRTY YEAR HISTORY. THE ALLIANCE'S CRITICS HAVE SAID THAT ITS COMING TO POWER WILL REPRESENT A REINTRODUCTION OF THE PERIOD OF THE FIFTIES, WHEN GOVERNMENTS ROSE AND FELL AGAINST A BACKGROUND OF PARTISAN INTRIGUE AND CORRUPTION OF OFFICE. YET IN THOSE YEARS REAL AUTHORITY, PARTICULARLY IN WEST PAKISTAN, RESTED PRINCIPALLY WITH NARROW INTERLINKED ELITES -- THE SENIOR CIVIL SERVANTS, THE MILITARY BRASS, THE LANDED GENTRY. MUCH HAS CHANGED IN THE INTERVENING YEARS IN THE WAY POWER IS DISTRIBUTED IN PAKISTAN, NOT LEAST DURING THE HALF DECADE OF PPP RULE. THE EROSION OF ELITES, THE POPULARIZATION OF INSTITUTIONS, THE SPREAD OF POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS BEYOND THE LEADERSHIP GROUPS, THE MULTIPLYING OF THESE GROUPS, ALL WILL COMBINE TO MAKE THE GOVERNING OF PAKISTAN IN A POST-BHUTTO ERA A COMPLICATED TASK. THE QUESTION BHUTTO'S SUCCESSORS WILL STRUGGLE WITH WILL ULTIMATELY BE WHERE DOES AUTHORITY LIE. AT THIS POINT NO ONE CAN BEGIN TO GUESS WHAT ANSWER THEY WILL FIND.
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